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PROPOSITIONS and INFERENCES, with STATISTICAL NOTES, touching
the provision of COUNTRY DWELLINGS for TOWN LABOURERS—
and in particular for those of the TOWN of LIVERPOOL. By
J. T. DANSON.

[Read before the Statistical Society, 19th April, 1859.]

AFTER carefully considering the facts brought together in this paper, with reference to the most intelligible mode of presenting them to the Society, I have adopted the form of a series of Propositions, each sustained by notes of the Statistical evidence on which it is founded, and a subsequent, but logically connected, series of Inferences, similarly sustained. In some instances, in order to bring the Paper within the compass of an evening's reading, a Proposition or Inference already proved elsewhere, is noted rather for illustration than for proof.

First Proposition.—That nearly all our large Towns have been formed, and are maintained, by the demand for Town labour, bringing, and keeping, there the labourers who supply that demand, together with their families.

Liverpool may be taken as a prominent instance. It appears from the census of 1851 that of the 213,767 persons, of 20 years of age and upwards, who slept within the limits of the Borough on the night of the 30th of March in that year, only 48,298, or about two out of every nine, were natives of the Town. Of the remainder, being immigrants, and 165,469 in number, no less than 61,089 were born in Ireland. It should here be observed, for it bears directly on the purpose of this paper, that, as a result of the migrant character of the labouring population of our large towns, they are very seldom under the influence of any local attachment; and that where any such attachment exists with them, it almost invariably has reference to a rural, and not to an urban locality. Hence the gradual removal of a portion of them to dwellings in the country would, in all probability, meet no obstacle from that source.

Second Proposition.—That of the whole number of persons thus brought into, and retained in, such towns, only a small proportion, say not more than one in five, or at the utmost one in four, is there required, or there employed, in the capacity of an effective labourer.

The average number of the family, in England, being about five,

it is computed that, allowing for women engaged only in domestic duties,—or in such occupations as might be equally well or better performed in the country—for children, and for the sick and aged, not more than one in five of the labouring population will be found actually engaged in those occupations for which residence in the Town is now really required. And, with reference to any suggestion of country dwellings for town labourers, this proportion may be deemed considerably less: seeing that many artificers and dealers, who serve the labouring classes, are now located solely by, and would follow, the dwellings of their customers. Assuming that every five families of what is commonly called the labouring class do, by living in a town, alone, give town-employment to one other family of the same class, the removal (even the nightly removal) of every five labouring men would have the effect of taking at least six families from the town.

Third Proposition.—That, as a rule, the men are wanted for town work, and their wives, female relations, and children are not; and the men, when sick or otherwise disabled, would, in general, be better in the country than in the town.

In or about the port of Liverpool there is but little demand for the services of women or children. In this respect—that is to say in the paucity of regular and profitable employment for women or children—the town may be deemed, in some degree exceptional. The manual labour in demand is almost wholly for the carriage, shipping, and storage of goods: operations of a rude nature, generally requiring considerable strength, and not admitting of the introduction of much light labour. But, even where this is otherwise, it forms no real obstruction to what I am about to propose, unless the employment whatever it may be, available for women or children, be such (as for instance connected with fixed machinery, or requiring to be done by workers collected in one building) as to preclude its being taken home.

Fourth Proposition.—That thus, for every effective labourer retained and maintained in such towns, several (probably four) other persons are now also kept there, and have to be provided with fit habitations, including air, water, and sewage.

This proposition may be deemed a corollary to the second. But it goes further: opening to view the whole of the sad and extensive field in which our sanitary reformers are now hardest at work, and in which they are, undoubtedly, much less successful than they commonly suppose they are: the house-accommodation of the poor in our large towns. There the habits previously formed, and too often fixed for life, in cottages by lane sides in the open country, or on

breezy heaths, and in open air occupations, are found very effective indeed to promote, by habitual disregard of ventilation, the least economical use of such breathing-space, and also such means of cleanliness, as can be had in towns, by those who can pay only for a little of either. They could not, however they valued space, have much of it, there. But they don't know its value; and thus often pay very dearly for *not* having even what they might

Fifth Proposition.—That repeated efforts concur in revealing great practical obstacles to the provision of fit habitations for the greater part of the population of such towns, within the towns themselves.

Trustworthy evidence, in detail, of any want of success in the philanthropic efforts recently made to improve the town dwellings of the poor, is, as yet, only to be had from those who are, or have been, engaged in such efforts. Time enough has hardly elapsed to discourage those who began these efforts with confident hope of success; and it is not to be expected that, until thoroughly convinced, gentlemen so engaged will afford willing evidence of their own failure. Nor indeed can it yet be said that the term "failure" is fairly applicable; though it certainly cannot be said that, in Liverpool, any remarkable degree of success has yet been achieved. Two distinct experiments have been made here. As to the first, I am enabled, by Mr. Charles Melly, who has been intimately connected with it, to state the following facts:—

Some six years ago, two blocks of building, in Frederick Street, termed the "Prince Albert Cottages," were erected, containing 23 separate dwellings, and costing, in round figures, for land 1,120*l.*, and for building 3,080*l.* total 4,200*l.* Three of these dwellings are now let at 5*s.* 9*d.* per week; 14 at 5*s.* 6*d.* and 6 at 4*s.*—all paid in advance. The rental, for the first five years, lately expired, has yielded from 5 to 5½ per cent. on the capital; and the net dividend realised by the owners, after putting aside ½ per cent. for a sinking fund, has been 4½ per cent.: not enough I fear to draw much more capital in the same direction. In comparing this with other investments in house-property, it will be borne in mind that a good deal of labour and attention is given, in these cases, on behalf of the landlords, for which no charge is made; and that permanent and effective success in such, or any similar undertakings—as a means of social reform—cannot be looked for, until they can be shown to afford a good investment for capital, in a purely monetary point of view.

The other experiment is yet in its infancy. It is that of "the "Liverpool Labourers' Dwellings Company." The Secretary to the Company, Mr. T. M. Myers, informs me that the 41 dwellings erected by them cost 6,350*l.*; and that the net rental for about three

quarters of the year 1857 (for which, alone, the accounts are yet complete) yielded a dividend of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the capital paid up.*

Sixth Proposition.—That excepting for the purpose of securing a due provision of food during the day, the labouring man does not need to communicate with his family from the morning till the evening of any working day.

Seventh Proposition.—That due provision of food could be readily made without any such communication.

In Liverpool, the principal field of labour is along, and in the immediate vicinity of, the dock quays. Here the labourer earning less than 25s. or 30s. a week, if he live near his work, must pay what is to him a high price for any dwelling, and cannot have one fit to rear a family in. And to live elsewhere renders it necessary (1) that he shall walk the distance, whatever it may be, between his house and his work four times a day, or (2) that some member of his family shall share this fatigue and exposure, and bring him his dinner, or (3) that he shall take his dinner with him in the morning.

The course first mentioned involves an addition, not desirable, to the muscular labour of the day, and also implies exposure to the weather, whence (with the slight provision persons so situated can make against such casualties) inevitably results some amount of disease, premature debility, and death. And either of the two other courses must give the man a cold dinner; and, for the winter half of the year, may be said almost to compel, and certainly to excuse, a resort to some public-house at mid-day. Now it is conceived—and it is one of the suggestions intended to be made by this paper—that the discomfort and liability to disease, waste of food, defective nutrition, needless labour, and temptation to drink, here referred to, might all, to a great extent, be got rid of, were properly warmed and well-regulated mess-rooms, with stoves and attendants for the warming or cooking of the victuals brought by the men, provided in our large towns, wherever a sufficient number of men could be conveniently brought together to use them.

It is probable that order might, in most cases, be maintained by putting the place in charge of persons elected by the frequenters from among themselves; and it has been ascertained that a very moderate subscription, from a large number, would amply defray the cost. The proof is, that such mess-rooms are, and have been for some years past, in successful operation in several places: in par-

* In 1858 the gross return was 326*l.*, and the net 120*l.*: again equal to $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum on the capital.

ticular at the factories of Price's Patent Candle Company, in London, and near Liverpool. These appear to have answered their purpose admirably; and I understand the Company find their share of the advantage a sufficient remuneration for the cost; which, accordingly, they defray, without aid from their workpeople. The mess-room at Bromborough (on the Mersey), is used daily by upwards of 200 men and boys: in other words, by nearly all who are not resident in the adjoining cottages belonging to the Company, and so have not ready access to their own houses. One material advantage, in this instance, and it is equally applicable to almost every instance of the employment of such labour, is found in the deposit with the mess-room cook, in the morning, of all bags and baskets. Such articles if carried to, and kept in, the places where the men work, obviously afford facilities for, and thence temptation to, petty pilfering. Whence, to take charge of them, is also, in one sense, to take charge of the bearer's honesty. The workpeople employed at Bromborough, as the superintendent informs me, "find " the room a great comfort: as they get their meals well and cleanly " cooked; and, in wet or cold weather, have a dry warm room to eat " them in."

I am informed that Messrs. Robert Scott and Co., of Castle Dykes, near Dumfries, have carried the system further: having found it advantageous (to both parties) also to provide food for their workpeople. Nor do I see any reason, in view of the advantages of co-operation in all such matters, to doubt that, with due care, the mid-day meal might thus be provided both better and cheaper than by the family.

Eighth Proposition.—That ready access to a rural district on *Sundays*, would, in all probability, beneficially affect the condition of all working men to whom it is not now available.

Let it be remembered that a Town Sunday is now no longer what it used to be. This fact is not only very significant. It is also less perceptible to, and thence is less considered by, many of us, than it should be. I believe that its full importance is not yet recognized even by many of those who have given special attention to such topics. In our great manufacturing and commercial towns, the streets are no longer filled several times in the day, as in the last and preceding generations, with the richer and better educated classes going to and returning from places of worship. All who under present arrangements have learned to value, and can afford, a suburban or country residence, now have it; and thus, on Sunday, the town is almost entirely abandoned to the smaller shopkeepers, the publicans, the labourers, the "dangerous classes," and the police. Whence evil example and weak imitation, leisure, and the absence of most

of those whose very presence would be a check, combine to make its social aspect far worse than on any other day. Whoever doubts this may readily convince himself by spending a few hours in the streets of any of our larger manufacturing or seaport towns on any Sunday in the year fair enough to allow the people to show themselves out of doors; but especially in the summer. How desirable it is that the labouring classes, and before all others the young persons, giddy and ill-guided, who are so numerous in our large towns, should, when not under the discipline of labour, profit by the social example of, rather than be estranged from, those higher in station—and that the day of rest should (for as many of them as possible) be one of tranquillity and innocent gratification in the country, rather than of riot and vice in a town, is sufficiently obvious. I do not forget the invariable grossness of the uneducated, as a body, wherever they are. But having often personally compared large towns with small villages, even in this respect, I cannot but deem the latter preferable on all points.

Ninth Proposition.—That women and children, resident in densely-peopled towns, endure at least an equal share (with men) of the evils now incident to excessive density of population; and that the greater part of what is suffered from this cause, by male labourers in towns, is caused by their remaining in the town at night.

Evil companionship and example, which a town life more or less forces upon the wives and children of the poor, have undoubtedly a worse effect upon the young and the idle than upon the well-employed and the mature. And it is even well that it is so. Were it not—were the young and the unemployed not easily led by the example of those around them—we should want one of the most effective means of promoting *good* conduct. And experience seems to justify the conjecture, to say the least, that the causes of disease are, in like manner, most effective upon children and unemployed persons. This, however, being a point on which there is yet some difference of opinion, I do not urge it.

Tenth Proposition.—That cheap and rapid means of communication, by railway, for passengers between all such towns and the neighbouring country, within a radius of (say) 20 miles, are now, or might speedily be made, available.

Here I cannot do better than take Liverpool as an example. It is computed, by those best acquainted with the subject, that the number of labourers of the lowest class employed on and about the dock quays of Liverpool, alone, exceeds 15,000. And this agrees

with the last census. In March, 1851 (since which time the town has largely increased both its commerce and its population) the number of persons sleeping within the borough, and returned under the single head of "labourers, branch undefined," was 11,788; and the "carters and porters" were 5,163. Four lines of railway now have termini in Liverpool; and a fifth is likely to be added shortly. The country traversed by each of these lines is more or less favourable for the formation of groups of labourers' dwellings, at distances varying from 5 to 20 miles from the town. If each line accommodated 2,000 men, and ran two trains in the morning, and two out in the evening, to suit the hours of labour (which are not very various), the cottages being erected either by the Company or by parties under contract with it, so that the price of a railway ticket for each house, might (but only as a matter of convenience to both parties) be charged in the rent, and that be taken in advance weekly; and a similar weekly accommodation were given to the women to come to town once a week, say on Saturday, for marketing, &c., the arrangement contemplated would be complete, and might be safely left to expand its dimensions, as the interests and the conveniences of all parties (thus placed in communication with each other) should dictate.

All that can at present be affirmed is that the arrangement seems feasible, not only to the writer of this paper, but to every one to whom he has proposed it for consideration in this neighbourhood; and this description includes some workmen of long experience, as well as persons whose lives have been spent in close communication with that class.

Eleventh Proposition.—That some of the most effective obstacles to providing fit habitations for labourers of the lower classes in towns, exist in a much less degree, or might be altogether removed, in the country.

First, as to the cost of land. I have stated that the ground for the "Prince Albert Cottages" erected in Frederick Street, Liverpool, cost 1,120*l.*; and the buildings 3,080*l.* I need not tell those who are acquainted with these matters that, in or near the centres of our large towns, land is often worth more per square yard, than it is per acre at a distance of 10 or 12 miles. In the instance now referred to, it formed more than one fourth of the total cost of the dwellings. In the country an acre of land, suited for such dwellings, may very commonly be had for 40*l.* Cutting out four lots of 1,100 square yards each—say 100 yards for the house and 1,000 for the garden—there would be left, of an acre, 440 square yards, for a drying ground, a common play-ground, or any similar purpose. Paying 5 per cent. on the cost, the ground-rent would be 40*s.*—or

10s. per house per annum. But the ground-rent on one of the "Prince Albert Cottages," let at 5s. 6d. per week, or 18l. 4s. per annum cannot be taken at much less than one-fourth of the rent, or (say) 4l. 10s. per annum. Here the difference of ground-rent, alone, would cover about four-fifths of the estimated railway-fare to and from the country [for which see notes to Inferences 2 and 3 pp. 371, 372, post]. And, be it remembered, the larger amount is now paid for a house in a closely-built town, and without a garden; while the smaller amount would cover not only the site of a commodious cottage, but also a garden yielding some food, besides healthy amusement and fresh air.

I am told that, on an average, the cost of building a cottage is quite as great in the country as in a town. And, strictly speaking, I believe this to be true. It accords with my own experience. But some of the accessories of the building, which are essential in a town, are less needed, or may be dispensed with, in the country. A rain-water tank to each house, and a well and pump to each group of houses, would in many instances cost less, and in very few would cost more, than a good town supply of water. Sewage would be cheaper; and watching and lighting might be dispensed with.

On the other hand owners and occupiers of land in the country very often object to the building of cottages, as likely to increase the poor rate of the district. But the proposed dwellings would all be within easy walking distance of a railway station, and would add proportionately to its traffic, and would, properly speaking, belong to it—and so would be entitled to share the credit of an effect due to every railway station—that of raising the value of land in its vicinity. The objection cannot be ignored: but I am convinced that, if fairly examined, it will, in most instances, be found to be wholly without foundation. And any comprehensive legislation on the "settlement" question must tend wholly to remove the ground of this objection. Finally, I may observe that, in practice, the difficulty of making the building of town dwellings for labourers a profitable investment arises, mainly, from the unwillingness of the tenants to pay for adequate ventilation, water supply, &c. the price these must cost in a town. In the country they might have them—so to speak—at their own price: at a price they are all able and willing to pay.

Twelfth Proposition.—That light and healthy occupations for women and children, not inconsistent, as to the women, with the duties of a mother, or as to the children, with school education, already offer themselves, and are increasing in extent, in the country districts immediately surrounding all our large towns; and that, in particular, the increased application of capital and machinery to agriculture is, by making clean

land in spring and large crops in autumn, at once more desirable and more attainable, and by increasing the demand for, and the profits from, well-kept market gardens, materially increasing the demand for light labour in weeding and other similar processes, and so is offering out-door employment of the healthiest description, at intermittent periods, but in the finest seasons, to increasing numbers of women and children.

Here I may rely, in some degree, upon my own experience in farming; and that of others, which I had occasion to observe when, for several years, I took an active part in the proceedings of an Agricultural Society including among its members nearly all the principal farmers in a district of some 60,000 acres near Liverpool. And, indeed, I think I may appeal, with confidence, to the observation of all who have been engaged in farming, near any large town, during the last ten years.

One result—and a result to which I know no exception—of the means recently adopted for economising rude labour in agriculture (as by improved machinery, and by the use of steam power) has been a steady and rapid increase of the demand for a lighter description of labour. In short, it is in agriculture as in manufactures; these improved methods, while superseding some rude labour, render it profitable, and to a great extent necessary, to employ more of a lighter description. I allude especially to the labour of hand-hoeing, gathering stones and weeds, driving cattle, carrying messages, &c., and assisting at harvest.

Assuming these Propositions to be established, I would suggest to the Society the following inferences from them:—

INFERENCES.

1. That the retention of a large portion of our present town population in the towns (even during the day) is not only undesirable, but is rapidly becoming no more necessary than would be the retention of an equal proportion of non-combatants in a military camp; and that a further portion might be removed at flight.

I say only a large portion. And here let me forestal the objection—imminent in any discussion of this paper—that what I propose is novel and untried. Already many men employed in our large towns, if unmarried, with (say) 25s. per week, sleep out of the town, if they please. With 35s. per week, and some determination,

even the married man, with a family, may do it too. And these, and those above them in means, are actually doing so, to a great extent; I might say doing so in proportion to their intelligence. All I have to urge is the expediency, if it be now practicable, or as soon as it shall become so, of extending the facilities now existing to this end, so that a *still lower* class may be able to use them. Not that I would have aught in this direction done without regard, or even with any diminution of the usual and legitimate regard, to profit. Quite otherwise. What has been done in the service of the classes who now have these facilities, has been done with no very general perception of the accruing *social* advantages; though these are now apparent enough. What I propose is, that a more intelligent advance should now (or as soon as may be) be made in the same direction, to the profit of all concerned, by extending similar facilities to a still lower class of town workers. Looking at the future by the light of the past, and of what is around us, in this north-western district of the kingdom, I see, that way, if I am not mistaken, a practicable mode of escape from the growing evils of excessive aggregation in Towns.

2. That this part of the population would be induced, by a judicious display of the requisite facilities, gradually to migrate to suburban villages, properly constructed in the vicinity of railway stations, existing or to be formed for the purpose, and readily accessible from the neighbouring towns.

I have said that there are four lines of railway out of Liverpool. But there are only two railway stations in the town: one at its northern end, and near the Exchange; and the other (the London and North-Western) on the eastern side of the town, but not far from its centre. It is probable that there will shortly be a third station formed at the south end of the town, in connection with the Great Northern Railway. The Exchange station, which is well situated for taking up and setting down persons employed at or near the principal docks, and the chief groups of warehouses, forms the common entrance and exit of three several lines of railway, which take different directions shortly after leaving the town. The most westerly of these runs only to Southport, a quiet little town, and bathing place, on the coast, distant about twenty miles. This line skirts, the whole way, a broad sandy shore, facing westward, and backed by open sandy land, yet thinly inhabited, but admirably adapted for the sites of cottages. On this line there are, already, seven stations, more than five miles from Liverpool. Another of these three lines—the “East Lancashire”—runs through a country more highly cultivated, and in which land is dearer; but which is also well adapted to the purpose in view; and it has now eight

stations, more than five, and less than twenty miles from Liverpool. And the third—the “Lancashire and Yorkshire”—running through an equally eligible country, has seven stations within these limits. The two last-mentioned lines enter, at a distance of some ten miles from the town, a district more elevated and picturesque than the flat country skirting the western coast, and lying immediately north of the town. The fourth or North-Western line, running direct to Manchester, has twelve stations within the same limits.

If a circle be drawn on the Ordnance Map, with its centre at the Exchange, and with a radius of ten miles, intersecting these four diverging lines of railway, it will be observed that at that distance they lie from five to seven miles apart from each other, and thus afford ample space for the freest development of the proposed scheme along each. And the total number of stations within the prescribed limits being thirty-four, if there were erected—gradually, and in the course of such a term of years as might afford time for a perfectly safe establishment of the system—an average of one hundred dwellings, at or near each station, accommodating as many workmen, and also, (say) four times as many women and children, healthy habitations would thus be provided for some 17,000 of the present labouring population of Liverpool. Add only 3,000 more for the families subservient to, and living by serving, these; and we have an addition of four thousand to the number of regular daily passengers on these lines; to say nothing of the attendant traffic inseparable from the altered location of so large a number of persons, all consumers of produce to be carried from Liverpool. Let the amount paid by each family, in all ways, for conveyance, be taken at only 5*l.* a year, and an addition would be made to the gross earnings of less than eighty miles of railway of 20,000*l.*, or more than 250*l.* per mile. This, too, would be only a beginning. And as the plan, if found agreeable and profitable—and I venture to think it could hardly be found otherwise to purchase better health, with all its attendant power and enjoyment, and increased length of life, with any moderate amount of money—might be expanded to a much greater extent from Liverpool,—and would be more or less applicable to every twenty miles of railway terminating in a large town,—the entire railway interest might, in some degree, share and profit by the new source of income. But, as the subject, where it touches existing facilities of conveyance, is one peculiarly of local detail, I here confine myself to Liverpool.

3. That—independently of the saving in medical attendance, loss of time by sickness, funeral expenses, and other forms of suffering and expense incidental (or on strong evidence assumed to be incidental) to certain violations of the sanitary laws now

in some sort forced upon the poor dwelling in large towns, but avoidable (and to a great extent actually avoided) by the same class in the country—the additional cost of conveyance to and fro for the working members of such families would probably be covered, in great part, by the additional earnings of the women and children.

If the money saved in sick time, in medical expenses, and in funeral expenses, and the pecuniary gain in the longer duration of active life (or in any, or some only, of these items) for a family of five persons be set down at 3*l.* per annum, and if we add only 1*s.* per week for additional earnings of the family, as in washing (which, in town, is costly and ill-done for themselves, and impracticable for others), in gardening, and light farm work, we have a total of 5*l.* 12*s.* per annum, added to the effective means of the family: which would probably be more than equivalent to the travelling expenses incurred under the proposed system, were it duly organized.

If the deaths among the removed population were reduced only by five per thousand per year, and the average cost of their funerals is only 3*l.*, the gain on this single item, to 20,000 persons, would be 300*l.* a year: the interest of 7,500*l.* sunk at 4 per cent.: which, taking land at 40*l.* per acre, would give a quarter of an acre of land to each of 750 families.

4. That a large proportion of the crime committed in towns may be traced to the presence of a dense labouring and poor population at other hours than those commonly employed in labour; and, as all municipal expenditure is more or less increased by the same cause, it is probable that the burden of local taxation (considered generally) would be rather diminished than increased by any such redistribution of the town population.

The chief of the Liverpool police (Major Greig), in his report to the Town Council for the year ending at Michaelmas, 1858, draws attention to the fact that “the various classes of larceny constituting “the great bulk of the offences, were of more frequent occurrence “in the winter than during the summer months;” and accounts for it, by stating that “the long dark nights are favourable for the “commission of” these offences. On turning to the quarterly lists of offences accompanying this report, I find that of a total of 5,012 offences committed and made known to the police during the year, and distributed under 42 technical descriptions, no less than 3,195 fall into three classes of larceny; and that of these 1,729 were committed in the six winter months, from October to March, and 1,466 in the other half of the year.

Another evil effect of the close packing of the families—and especially the young females—of our growing labouring population in the lowest and worst-built parts of our great towns, is seen in the rapid increase, of late years, in the number of female criminals, and also the increased gravity of the offences with which they are charged.

Especially is this observable in Liverpool, where the constant presence of a large and fluctuating body of seamen, and probably as many more persons of a similar class, and in a more or less migratory condition, with money to spare and no immediate occupation, tends strongly to demoralize, at an early age, and for life, the females of the lower classes. In the year ending at Michaelmas, 1857, the number of persons charged with criminal offences in Liverpool, and dealt with summarily, being 21,080, no less than 8,235, or nearly 40 per cent., were females; and only 26 per cent. of the whole number (of 21,080) were natives of Liverpool. In 1857-8 the females were 7,393 out of 19,021, or 38 per cent. of the whole, and only 24 per cent. were natives of the town. But in the same two years the proportion of females among the criminals charged with offences of *a graver character*, and committed for trial, was still higher, being in 1856-7 42 per cent., and in 1857-8 44 per cent. of the whole number. This has been traced to an apparent inveteracy of the criminal tendency in females, when once developed, arising in part probably from the greater difficulty a woman once marked as a criminal finds, not only in returning to a station of respectability, but in finding any other than a criminal occupation. Residence in the country might often prevent this hopeless degradation; and, relying on my own observation, I am persuaded that it would.

In agricultural districts, the proportion of female criminals does not usually, exceed 12 to 15 per cent.; or about one-third of that prevalent in Liverpool.

As to the diminution of expense to the country likely to attend any diminution of crime, I find, on referring to the "Judicial Statistics, 1857," that the average cost of each prosecution (so far only as it is paid out of the public revenue) is, in a summary proceeding before a magistrate, 1*l.* 11*s.* 5*d.*; and by indictment 9*l.* 2*s.* 3*d.* The maintenance of each prisoner while in gaol (and when his cost to the country, all things considered, is probably at a minimum) was at the rate, averaging the last five years, of 27*l.* 4*s.* 7*d.* per annum. Add, when not in gaol, the extra cost of living by depredation, with the destruction and waste of property necessarily incident to a life of crime, and it will not be deemed an immoderate estimate which puts down 150*l.* a year as the average current cost, in money, of each person falling into and remaining in this class. One hundred withdrawn, or withheld, from the present

list in Liverpool, would, on this estimate, afford a gain to the town of 15,000*l.* a year—enough to pay ample interest on 300,000*l.*, were that sum invested in any means whatever for bringing about such a result.

It also appears, by the “Judicial Statistics, 1857,” that of the whole body of criminals in that year, upwards of 40 per cent. were “*labourers*,” upwards of 18 per cent. “*mechanics and skilled workers*,” and 22 per cent. “*persons of no occupation* ;” and as a large majority under this last head were *females*, it may be inferred that nearly all these—or about 80 per cent. of the whole body of criminals—were of the very class now compelled (in many instances most unwillingly, while not yet criminal) to spend their leisure hours in the bad moral and physical atmosphere of our overcrowded towns.

5. That, in particular, juvenile crime might thus be largely prevented: the criminal tendency, where existing, being, in the country, far less fostered, either by temptation or by evil example.

The returns of commitments show that juvenile crime is more common in towns than in the country. Petty larceny—the chief crime of towns—is peculiarly adapted to the powers of children. Almost every natural vent for the inherent activity and curiosity of boys is there closed; while all their faculties are preternaturally sharpened; and acquisitiveness is cultivated by the example of all whom they are taught to look up to. Whence crime becomes, to many of them, inevitable.*

* I find that of 960 “youthful offenders” who were sent to Reformatory Schools in England and Wales in the year ending 30th September, 1857, as many as 756 had been convicted of various forms of larceny, 44 of vagrancy, 43 of attempts to steal, 26 of housebreaking, 23 of unlawful possession of goods, and the remaining 68 of other offences: and 633 of them had been previously in prison—373 of them more than once.

The number of males under sixteen years of age committed in the same year to the different prisons of the kingdom, displays in almost every instance a larger proportion for the borough than for the county gaols; though it is well known that many of the depredations committed, and punished, in agricultural districts are traceable to criminals bred in towns, and usually resident there. For instance, for the Aylesbury county gaol we find, under sixteen years of age 38 males out of a total of 591; in Exeter county gaol, 50 out of 771; in Springfield (the largest county gaol in Essex), 76 out of 964; in Hereford, 12 out of 312; in Warwick county gaol, 7 out of 329; in Worcester county gaol, 48 out of 1,005; in Wakefield county gaol, 223 out of 3,450; in Preston county gaol, 100 out of 1,476.

Turning to the borough gaols, we find for that of Liverpool 502 males out of a total of 4,811; in Manchester, 463 out of 2,305; in Birmingham, 244 out of 1,545; in Hull, 161 out of 847.

The statistics we yet have on this subject are very imperfect; but, such as they are, they undoubtedly tend to confirm the opinion that a town life, for the children of the labouring classes, is promotive of juvenile crime.

In the year 1857-8, the number of criminals taken into custody in Liverpool, who were under sixteen years of age, was 922, a number below the average of past years. Many of these now annually pass into Reformatories, where they remain for a term of years; and in most instances are thus permanently withdrawn from the criminal population. Of course it were better they had not entered that class. As it is, the supply of juvenile criminals is kept up with considerable regularity; and the numbers apprehended indicate the constant existence in the town of a large number of criminally-trained children.

6. That the "Health of Towns Question" being thus reduced within a compass more nearly commensurate with existing means, might be the sooner and the more satisfactorily solved.
7. That agriculture would be served by an increased and well distributed supply of labour, and by the conservation, in cottage middens, of a large quantity of the best manure, now sacrificed in the effort, hitherto vain, to maintain effectually the sewage of our densely-peopled towns.

Objections are very justly urged to cesspools, middens, and all other accumulations of refuse matter in the neighbourhood of dwellings; but, for the dwellings of the poor, I conceive these to be, in the present state of our knowledge, unavoidable in some shape. Quick removal is the only practicable remedy. To that, in the country, would be added a rapid and effectual dilution of all dangerous emanations, in an abundance of free and fresh air; and, in the country, manure being in demand in the immediate neighbourhood, if not on the very spot, rapid removal would involve little or no expense.

8. That the Railway interest might thus be served by the gradual opening of a new and permanent and an ever increasing source of traffic.

This is a point for the consideration of the Railway interest; and it is presented to that interest for consideration solely on the ground that the scheme proposed affords a feasible prospect of profit to railway proprietors. It were unjust to expect that it should be entertained on any other ground.

9. And lastly, that the rapid growth of our town populations, which is already involving us in social problems of the most painful and perplexing character, might thus be turned into a new channel, in which many of these problems would immediately find a natural and complete solution.

I am aware that these Propositions and Inferences have little or no claim to originality. On several occasions, and by several persons, proposals more or less similar have been made public. This, like those, may fail to attract attention. I hope not: but, even if so, events are now moving too rapidly to admit of our much longer neglecting the basis of the Health of Towns Question; and all earnest discussion of the subject, however excited, will probably aid in bringing us at length to sound conclusions.

It is well known that most of the town labourers, *who can afford it*, are already making, or have made, for themselves the very change here suggested for those who cannot. Cannot, I mean, at present. But it is by no means certain that this want of power on the part of the town labourers who earn (say) from 15*s.* to 25*s.* per week, is more than apparent; or if real, is not dependent very much upon the will of the classes employing these labourers.*

Show these men cottages in the country, such as I have supposed, readily accessible, and combined with an increase, not a diminution, of the other necessities and comforts of life, and I am persuaded they would take advantage of them. Imitation and expediency have effected far greater social changes. Of course the change would be gradual, as all such changes, to be permanent and beneficial, must be; but once begun, this would be no subject of regret. Existing interests would have the more time to accommodate themselves to the effect; and as all parties would be left free to act upon a sense of their own interests, none would have, at any stage of the process, a right to complain.

* Mr. Newmarch, one of the ablest of those who took part in the discussion with which this Paper was honoured when read before the Society, objected to my proposal, "that the density of town populations has been and is in course of being relieved by carrying to the outer circles not the poor, but the rich and middle classes. The larger houses thus vacated become available for poorer tenants. Witness Bloomsbury, New Road, Finsbury, &c. The object is therefore to multiply railways as much as possible, but not under the expectation that you will carry first the poor into the country, but first the rich and then the poor. Towns are unhealthy, not so much because they are towns, as because the houses in them are over full." So much the objector himself has since been good enough to state to me in writing. Had I been present, I should have desired to reply thus:—The rich are gone [from Liverpool], the middle classes are going. I should like to see the better part of the poor following (not preceding) these. Here I have been misapprehended. Again—large houses when vacated by the rich, are, so far as I have observed, more densely filled, precisely in proportion as their occupants approach the class of "poor;" and when filled by the poor, are filled as densely as their own proper dwellings. This alike in London and in Liverpool; so this change really affords no relief; but it accounts in part for the *fact*, apparent on the face of our censuses, that our large towns are now increasing the number of their inhabitants faster, in proportion, than they increase the area they cover.

I may also observe that the benefits of the proposed system would be equally real whether it were adopted so far as to diminish the resident population of our large towns, or to keep it stationary, or only to reduce its present rate of increase.
